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HOW TO... Create comments in Word

It's easy to annotate your documents as you write them.
Lynley Oram explains how to use Word's Comment tool

It can be useful to keep notes alongside information you enter into a Word document. The Comment tool makes this easy. When you're in Print or Web layout view, comments appear in balloons down the side of the page. To see a comment in Normal View, hover the cursor over it and a balloon displaying the comment will pop up. We'll show you how to use and customise this feature using Word 2003, with any differences in Word 2007 noted.

1 Select Web or Print Layout from the View menu (View ribbon in Word 2007). Highlight the text you'd like to annotate with a comment, or place the cursor where you'd like your note inserted. Select Comment from the Insert menu (Review Ribbon, Comment). A comment balloon appears on the page to the right of the text. This action also opens the Reviewing toolbar. You can start typing directly into the comment balloon. When you're in Normal view, the Reviewing pane appears instead. Your notes are then entered into the Comment section of the Reviewing pane. To hide the Reviewing pane in Normal view, click on Show on the Reviewing toolbar. From the drop-down menu, remove the tick next to Reviewing Pane.

2 If all those comment balloons are cluttering up the page, you can hide them until they're needed. Go to the Reviewing toolbar and click on Show (Review

ribbon, Show Markup). Remove the tick next to Comment. When you want to see any comments later, tick this option in the Show menu.

3 The comment balloon shows notes against a shaded background. You're not stuck with the colour Word uses. To change the balloon colour, click on Show on the Reviewing toolbar and select Options (Review ribbon, Track changes, Change tracking options). If the toolbar isn't open, you can also find this dialog box by clicking on the Tools menu and selecting Options. Go to the Track Changes tab and click in the Comments Color box. Word 2007 users need to display the Review tab on the ribbon at the top of the screen and click on Track Changes in the Tracking Group. Select Change Tracking Options.

4 To customise the style of the text in a comment balloon, click on the Format menu and select Styles and Formatting. In the list under Pick Formatting, right-click on Comment Text and select Modify (Home ribbon, Show styles button, Manage styles button). If this option isn't available, click in the Show box and select Custom. In the list of Styles to be visible, scroll down to Comment Text and tick its box. Click OK. In the Modify Style box, you can change the default font, size and colour. For a range of other options, click on the Format button. Click OK when you're done.

